



Heritage and Design and Access Statement - repairs following flood

Jessamine Cottage, Gay Street
Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2HL

Date: 30th May 2026



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1 Introduction

This heritage statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent, for repairs to Jessamine Cottage, following a flood which affected the whole of the ground floor in December 2025.

Jessamine Cottage is grade II listed in the parish of West Chiltington and was listed on 9th May 1980.

It would appear to have been constructed in the 1600's or late 1500's and there is a stone extension at the south end. The area is characterized by scattered farmsteads, cottages and agricultural land, much of which has remained relatively unchanged over centuries.

The Historic England listing description is noted below:

Jessamine Cottage

Listing NGR: TQ0824221103

Restored C17 or earlier timber framed cottage with plaster infilling and one window bay added at south end in stone. Tiled roof. Casement windows. One blocked original window of six lights with wooden mullions. Two storeys. Three windows.



Photo (i) – entrance and front elevation



Photo (ii) – rear elevation



Photo (iii) – side elevation

2 Context

2.1 Historical Context

The cottage is a two storey timber framed property, with a pitched tiled roof and leaded light timber casement windows, with one remaining infilled original window. The property is in a rural setting which has not changed significantly over the years. The location of the cottage is shown in Fig(i) below as taken from the Historic England map.



Fig (i) – location of Jessamine Cottage

Unfortunately the cottage has undergone extensive inappropriate repairs in the past, (probably before the property was listed), including the use of concrete floors, cement rendered panels and repairs using modern plaster and paints.

2.2 Events resulting in the damage to the property

In December 2025 the property was subject to a flood due to heavy rain, which affected the whole of the ground floor of the property. Standing water was left in the property for some time, until the water naturally drained away. The property has been left to dry out but repairs are now essential in order to use the ground floor as it was intended.

Photos numbers 1-67 in the attached photographic schedule were taken by the structural engineer shortly after the flood.

2.3 Planning Policy Context – National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by

their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

This heritage statement therefore concentrates on the parts of the building which are affected by the proposed works.

3 The Proposals

3.1 New limecrete floor to kitchen

It is proposed to replace the existing modern slate tiled floor, (photo iv) and assumed concrete floor to the kitchen, with a limecrete floor, (fig ii). It is assumed that the existing foundations will be extremely shallow. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that the new floor does not undermine the existing shallow footings. It is proposed to either chamfer at a 45 degrees angle from the wall as indicated in Fig(iii), or if the foundations are found to be too shallow for this, then the floor will be stepped in by 200mm and then chamfered at 45 degrees from here. The make up will consist of a breathable geotextile membrane on levelled and compacted ground, a 80-100mm layer of recycled foamed glass insulation, followed by another layer of geotextile membrane and with a 100mm NHL5 limecrete slab, with a 30mm cork board to the external perimeter walls, with a 50mm NHL 2:1 mix lime screed topping, finished with a new slate floor to match the original with joints pointed in a lime mortar. Note: the slate floor will not be laid until the limecrete floor has fully cured, and any sealer applied will be a natural stone breathable sealer so as not to trap the moisture in.

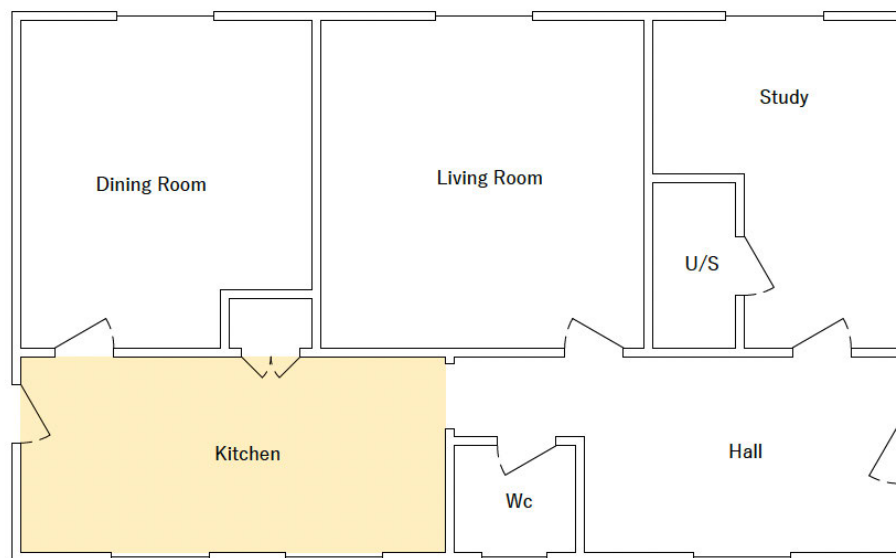


Fig (ii) – kitchen floor floor to be replaced in limecrete

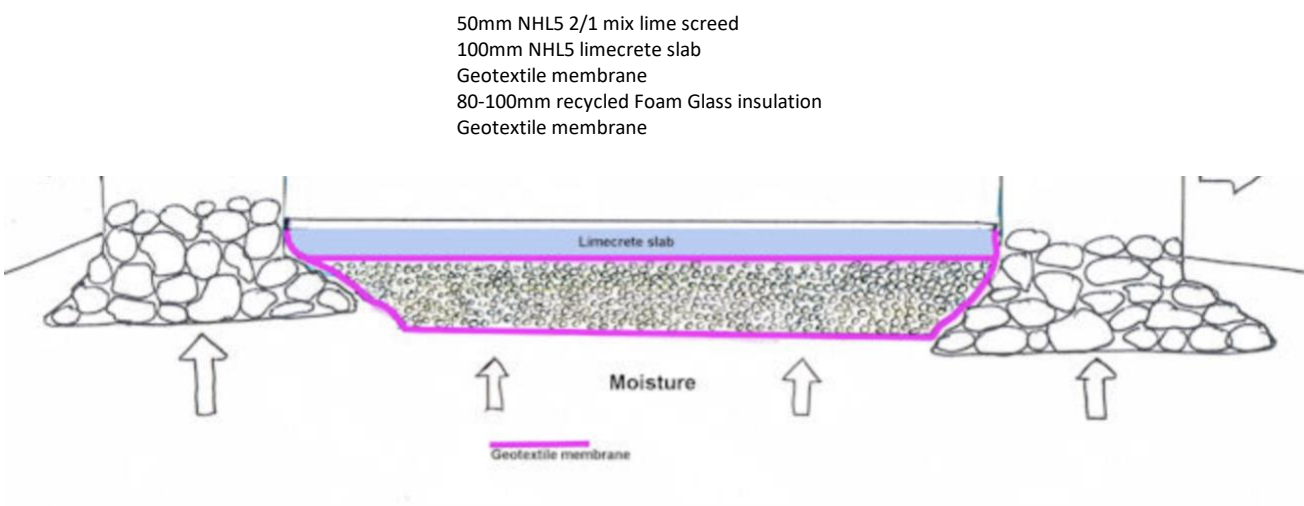


Fig (iii) – proposed new limecrete floor makeup for kitchen



Photo (iv) – modern slate floor to kitchen

3.2 Wallplaster repairs

The existing walls throughout the property are a mixture of lime and modern plasters, (photo v), including what would appear to be an historic attempt at damp proofing. Unfortunately, there is a very hard cement type render encasing the ground beam within the dining room on the end wall. As a result, water has become trapped behind the render resulting in decay of the ground beam. Due to the large amounts of modern renders and plasters to the wall and the use of modern unbreathable paints, removal of the existing

plaster up to a height of 1.2m is required following the flood to all external and internal walls and partitions to the extent shown in blue in fig (iv). It is also necessary to replace the ground beam as discussed later.

It is proposed to carefully remove the existing plaster up to a height of 1.2m to all walls, (fig ii) and allow the walls to dry out. Following repairs to the timber frame and the infill panels using matching materials, the walls will be replastered using a three coat lime putty plaster, (10mm scratch coat and then 15mm ready mixed haired lime mortar from Mike Wye with Pozzolan and 3mm heritage lime plaster setting coat). Following completion and allowing the plaster to dry for around 6 weeks a breathable clay paint will be applied.



Photo (v) – typical plastered wall

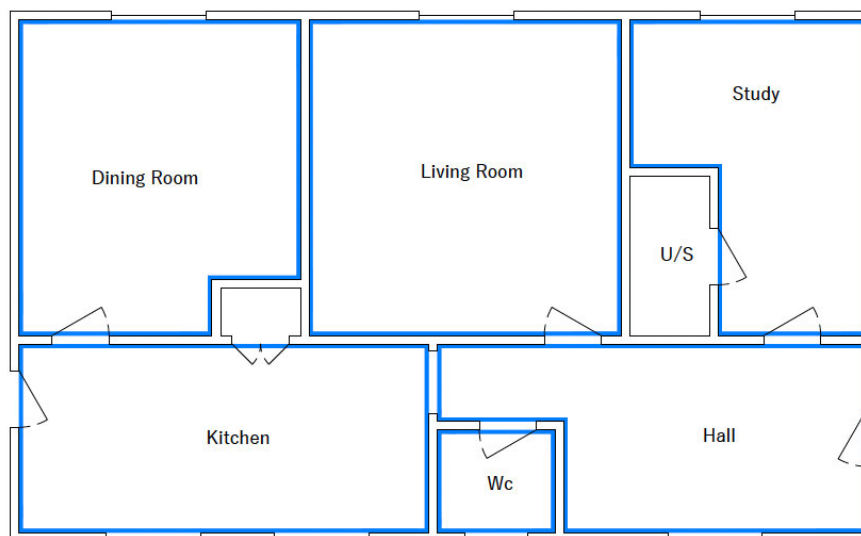


Fig (iv) – floor plan showing proposed removal of wall plaster to a height of 1.2m

If it is necessary to rewire the existing electrical sockets, these will be raised up to a height between 450mm to 750mm in order to meet current building regulation requirements and also to prevent disturbance in future should there be another flood.

3.3 Existing stone and brick floors

The remaining floors throughout the property are a mixture of brick and stone all pointed using a cement mortar, (photos vi and vii). It is acknowledged that the stone and brick floors should be pointed in a lime mortar as cement is too strong and does not allow for any moisture to escape. However, removal of the cement joints is likely to cause damage to the stone and brick floors and is therefore best left undisturbed. It is therefore proposed to steam clean the floors throughout the remainder of the property using a DOFF system. A sample area will be carried out first to ensure the bricks and stone flags are not damaged.



Photo (vi) – typical stone floor (dining room)



Photo (vii) – brick flooring (hall)

3.4 Timber ground beam and corner post

The timber ground beam within the dining room was found to be encased in a hard cement type mortar which would appear to be an historic attempt at damp proofing, (photos viii and ix). A small section of the hard render was removed revealing the severely decayed ground beam, (photo ix). It is therefore proposed to remove the hard cement render and replace the ground beam together with the bottom of the corner post which is also decayed, and suffering from a previous cement mortar inappropriate repair (photo xi). The ground beam was also noted to be encased in cement mortar externally, (photo x). External ground levels will also be lowered to help prevent future decay.



Photo (viii) – timber ground beam to dining room encased in mortar



Photo (ix) – small section of mortar removed revealing decayed ground beam



Photo (xi) – ground beam encased in cement render to be replaced



Photo (xii) – decayed bottom section of corner post with cement mortar repair

It is proposed to carefully cut off the damaged section of the corner post and form a new traditional splayed, undersquinted and cogged scarf joint as shown in fig (v). The new timber sole plate will be morticed and tenoned into the existing posts as shown in figs (vi) and (vii). All new timbers will be air dried oak and sized to match the existing timbers.

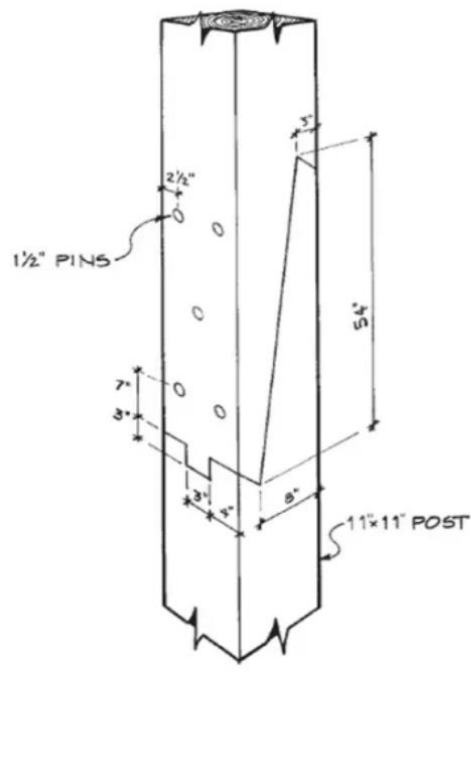


Fig (v) – splayed undersquinted and cogged scarf joint

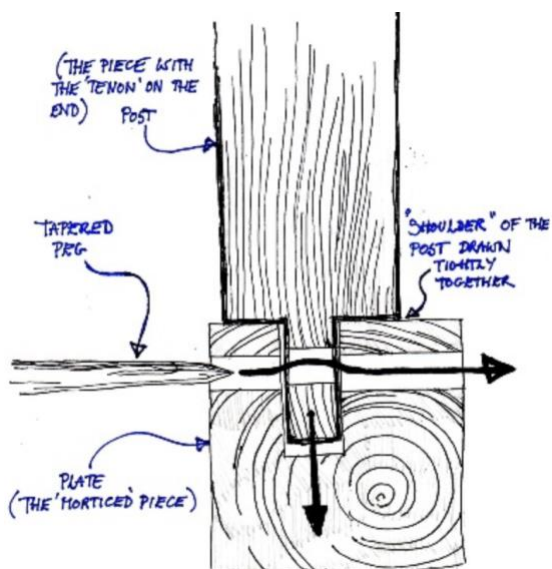


Fig (vi) – proposed base timber joint with timber pegs

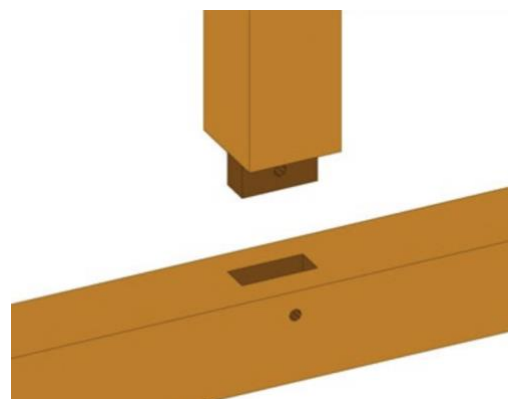


Fig (vii) – mortice and tenon joint

Externally any disturbed render will be repaired using an NHL 3.5 lime render.

4 Significance of Jessamine Cottage and assessment of impact

The significance of Jessamine Cottage is due to its survival as a relatively intact example of a small rural Sussex timber-framed dwelling in a dispersed farm and cottage settlement typical of West Sussex. It retains a blocked original six light mullioned window. However, it's significance has been affected by some previous inappropriate repairs including the use of modern plasters and cement renders.

The repairs are essential following the flood to the property. Where possible repairs will be carried out to match the original in every respect, using traditional lime mortars and renders, a new limecrete floor to the kitchen and timber frame repairs using traditional jointing methods. This will therefore benefit the property by helping the walls affected to be able to breathe again. However, it should be appreciated that not all external inappropriate cement render will be removed, as it is not part of the damage caused by the flood.

5 Conclusion

The proposed works will be carried out using traditional materials. The removal of some of the inappropriate plaster and some modern external render will only be of benefit to the property, allowing the structure to breathe at least internally. The replacement of part of the concrete floor with limecrete, will also help at least some of the floor to breathe, helping to preserve the building in the long term.

The works are considered to be beneficial to the historic fabric of the building, allowing the walls to breathe again at least from the inside, thus helping to prevent future damage to the walls as a result of continuing damp issues.

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